

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3 stand objected to for antecedent basis issues. Claims 1 and 3 have been amended to provide proper antecedent basis for the terms at issue. Accordingly, withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4, 8 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by United States Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0075429A1 to Fujioka et al. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Applicants respectfully submit that the Fujioka et al. reference does not disclose all of the features of the present invention. More specifically, Applicants respectfully submit that the Fujioka et al. reference does not disclose the “cell gap control layer,” as recited in independent Claims 1 and 3.

One example of an embodiment of the present invention that includes the cell gap control layer defined in independent Claims 1 and 3 is shown in Applicants' Figures 3 and 4. In these figures, the cell gap control layer 42 is shown as being inside the sealing material forming region (near sealing material 40), without being formed under the sealing material. Further, Figure 4 also shows how the cell gap control layer 42 reduces the cell gap between the base substrate 10 and the opposite substrate 11 to thickness “d1,” such that the cell gap in a display area where the cell gap control layer 42 is formed (thickness d1) is less than a gap in an area outside of the cell gap control layer 42 (thickness d2). Such a configuration advantageously provides a desirably smaller cell gap (d1) in the display area,

without the need for reducing the amount of sealing material ejected from the dispenser because a gap (d2) in the sealing material forming region can remain relatively large.

In contrast, layer 104 of the Fujioka et al. reference is not described as being a “cell gap control layer,” but is instead merely described as an “inter-layer insulation film.” Figure 13 shows inter-layer insulation film 104 as being *completely* eliminated under the sealing material 103. However, in paragraph [0108] of the Fujioka et al. reference, the explanation of the Figure 13 embodiment discloses that the inter-layer insulation film 104 under the sealing material 103 can be instead be only *partially* eliminated, so that the sealing material 103 overlaps a portion of the inter-layer insulation film 104 (such as shown in Figures 8, 9, 12 and 17). Thus, the Fujioka et al. reference discloses that the inter-layer insulation film 104 may be formed either under the sealing material 103 (as shown in Figures 8, 9, 12 and 17, or the inter-layer insulation film may terminate prior to reaching the sealing material (as shown in Figure 13). Thus, since the insulation film 104 of Fujioka et al. can either be provided adjacent to the sealing material 103 or under the sealing material, and there is no disclosure or suggestion that the cell gap is changed regardless of the which configuration is used, Applicants respectfully submit that film 104 of Figure 13 cannot be considered as the claimed “cell gap control layer” because the cell gap in this configuration is no different than the cell gap when the insulation film is formed under the sealing material. Accordingly, because all of the features of independent Claims 1 and 3 are not disclosed in the Fujioka et al. reference, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of this §102(b) rejection of independent Claims 1 and 3 and associated dependent Claims 2, 4, 8 and 9.

Claim 5 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Fujioka et al. in view of United States Patent No. 5,748,266 to Kodate. Claims 6 and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Fujioka et al. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Claims 5, 6 and 7 all depend from independent Claim 3, and therefore include all of the features of Claim 3, plus additional features. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that these 103 rejections of dependent Claims 5, 6, and 7 be withdrawn considering the above remarks directed to independent Claim 3, and also because the Kodate reference does not remedy the deficiency discussed above in response to the §102(b) rejection, nor was it relied upon as such.

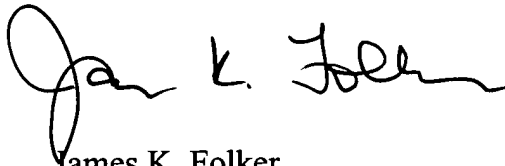
Finally, Applicants have also added new dependent Claims 10-15. Applicants respectfully submit that dependent Claims 10-15 are allowable for at least the reasons discussed above that render associated independent Claim 1 and 3 allowable.

For all of the above reasons, Applicants request reconsideration and allowance of the claimed invention. Should the Examiner be of the opinion that a telephone conference

would aid in the prosecution of the application, or that outstanding issues exist, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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March 6, 2006

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